

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (currently amended) A method for obtaining an electrical signal from a patient at the patient's skin, said method comprising:

locating a probe in contact with the patient's skin for measuring an electrical signal of a

dermal area near a meridian;

contacting, with an isolation hood of said probe, the dermal area;

actuating a motor and feedback loop to apply pressure to a probe tip independent of the

pressure on the isolation hood against the skin; and

measuring, at the skin, an electrical attribute corresponding to said meridian.

2. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein locating a dermal area further comprises providing a point locator for indicating a dermal location having a substantially greater electrical signal values than a surrounding dermal area, said point locator configured to produce audible signals indicating said dermal location.

3. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein said probe further comprises:
a biasing element operably connected to probe tip to control at least one of the following:

a) the rate that pressure is applied to probe tip, and

b) the amount of pressure applied to probe tip

4. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein the biasing element is controlled via a feedback loop to provide a feedback signal containing information with respect to said electrical signal.

5. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein said probe tip further comprises: a convex conductive base; and an abrasive bristly matrix coupled to a surface area of said convex conductive base, wherein a plurality of bristles of said abrasive bristly matrix simultaneously contact said dermal area.

6. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein said applying pressure to said probe further comprises:

stabilizing said probe against said dermal area;

iteratively measuring a electrical signal value of said dermal area as said pressure increases;

iteratively comparing a present electrical signal value of said dermal area corresponding to a present amount of pressure to a previous electrical signal value corresponding to a previous amount of pressure; and;

changing said future amount of pressure when said present electrical signal value is substantially different than said previous electrical signal value.

7. (currently amended) A method for obtaining an electrical signal from a patient at the patient's skin, said method comprising:

locating a dermal area of said patient approximating a meridian;

contacting, with a probe, said dermal area, said probe comprising:

a stationary element to stabilize said probe against said dermal area;

a probe tip operably connected to said biasing element to apply a pressure to said dermal area;

a detector operably connected to said probe tip to detect an electrical signal at the patient's skin corresponding to said pressure;

a feedback loop connected to said detector to provide a feedback signal containing information with respect to said electrical signal at the patient's skin;

a biasing element connected to said feedback loop to receive said feedback signal and adjust said pressure in accordance with said feedback signal; and

obtaining, from said probe, an electrical signal at the patient's skin corresponding to said meridian.

8. (previously presented) The method of claim 7, wherein said locating a dermal area further comprises providing a point locator for indicating a dermal location having a substantially greater bioelectric conductance value than a surrounding dermal area, said point locator configured to produce audible signals indicating said location.

9. (previously presented) The method of claim 7, wherein said probe further comprises:
a conductive base; and

an abrasive bristly matrix coupled to a surface area of said conductive base, wherein a plurality of bristles of said abrasive bristly matrix simultaneously contact said dermal area.

10. (previously presented) The method of claim 7, wherein said information comprises a bioelectric conductance value.

11. (currently amended) A method for obtaining an electrical signal from a patient at the patient's skin, said method comprising:

measuring relative conductance of a dermal area of said patient proximate a meridian;

contacting with a probe the skin, said probe comprising:

a stationary element to stabilize said probe against said location;

a probe tip operably connected to said biasing element to apply a pressure to said location;

a detector operably connected to said probe tip to detect an electrical signal at the patient's skin corresponding to said pressure;

a feedback loop connected to said detector to provide a feedback signal containing information with respect to said electrical signal at the patient's skin; and

a biasing element connected to said feedback loop to receive said feedback signal

and adjust said pressure in accordance with said feedback signal; and

obtaining, from said probe, an electrical signal at the patient's skin

corresponding to said meridian.

12. (previously presented) The method of claim 11, wherein said measuring relative conductance of a dermal area further comprises:

iteratively measuring a bioelectric conductance value of a surface of said dermal area;
iteratively comparing a first said bioelectric conductance value corresponding to a first surface location to a second said bioelectric conductance value corresponding to a second surface location;
audibly indicating a dermal location where said second bioelectric conductance value is substantially greater than said first bioelectric conductance value.

13. (previously presented) The method of claim 11, wherein said probe further comprises:

a conductive base; and
an abrasive bristly matrix coupled to a surface area of said conductive base, wherein a plurality of bristles of said abrasive bristly matrix simultaneously contact said dermal area.

14. (currently amended) The method of claim ~~12~~ 11, wherein said information comprises a bioelectric conductance value corresponding to said pressure.

15. (currently amended) A method for obtaining an electrical signal from a patient at the patient's skin, said method comprising:

providing electrical feedback to a probe that is configured for measuring an electrical signal of a dermal area near a meridian by contacting the dermal area with said probe and actuating a motor in concert with the electrical feedback to apply

pressure to a probe tip independent of the pressure on an isolation hood against the skin;

using the electrical feedback to determine when to stop applying the pressure to the probe tip;

measuring an electrical attribute at the patient's skin corresponding to said meridian.

16. (withdrawn) A computer program product for implementing within a system a method for utilizing electrical feedback in obtaining an electrical signal from a patient, the computer program product comprising:

a computer readable medium for providing computer program code means utilized to implement the method, wherein the computer program code means is comprised of executable code for implementing the steps for:

initiating electrical feedback to a probe, wherein the probe is configured for measuring an electrical signal of a dermal area near a meridian by contacting the dermal area with said probe and actuating a motor in concert with the electrical feedback to apply pressure to a probe tip independent of the pressure on an isolation hood against the skin;

using the electrical feedback to determine when to stop applying the pressure to the probe tip as a result of having measured an electrical attribute corresponding to said maridian.